

Board of Education Agenda Item

Item: I.

Date: September 21, 2005

Topic: First Review of a Request to Extend Approval of an Alternative Accreditation Plan from Chesterfield County Public Schools

Presenters: Dr. Billy K. Cannaday, Superintendent, Chesterfield County Public Schools
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Origin:

 Topic presented for information only (no board action required)

X Board review required by
 State or federal law or regulation
 Board of Education regulation

X Other: The Board's approval of the alternative accreditation plan included the provision that future extensions of the plan would be contingent upon the submission of an evaluation showing that the stated objectives of the program and evaluative criteria had been met.

X Action requested at this meeting

 Action requested at future meeting: (date)

Previous Review/Action:

 No previous board review/action

X Previous review/action
date July 21, 2004 – Approval of the Alternative Accreditation Plan from Chesterfield County Public Schools

Background Information: The Standards of Accreditation, in 8 VAC 20-131-280, says: "Special purpose schools such as regional, special education, alternative, or career and technical schools that serve as the student's school of principal enrollment shall be evaluated on standards appropriate to the programs offered in the school and approved by the Board..." The Board of Education's guidelines for this regulation says, in part: "In accordance with the provisions of 8 VAC 20-131-330 of these standards, local school boards may seek waivers of provisions of the standards to address the unique needs of these special purpose schools. Such requests may include an alternative accreditation plan."

Chesterfield County Public Schools received the first approval of an alternative accreditation plan granted by the Board of Education. A one-year alternative accreditation plan for Perrymont Middle School was approved on July 21, 2004, with the provision that future extensions would be contingent upon the submission of an evaluation showing that the stated objectives of the program and evaluative criteria had been met.

Summary of Major Elements: Perrymont Middle School is an alternative school that serves students who have fallen significantly behind academically. The objective of the program is to prepare students in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades who are significantly behind in academic and behavioral fundamentals to enter and complete high school. The program of instruction includes the following components:

- The focus is on reading, writing, and mathematics; history and science instruction is embedded in instruction in reading, writing, and mathematics;
- Students are taught study skills and self-management skills;
- The school day is longer (6 ½ hours); and
- The pupil-teacher ratio is currently 12:1.

As a part of the approval of the alternative accreditation plan, the Board approved waivers of the following provisions of the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*:

- “The middle schools shall provide a minimum of eight courses to students in the eighth grade. Courses in English, mathematics, science, and history/social science shall be required.” (8 VAC 20-131-90.B)
- “Four elective courses shall be available: level one of a foreign language, one in health and physical education, one in fine arts, and one in career and technical exploration.” (8 VAC 20-131-90.B)
- “To provide students a sufficient opportunity to learn, each student shall be provided 140 clock hours per year of instruction in each of the four disciplines of English, math, science, and history/social science.” (8 VAC 20-131-90.D, waived for science and history/social science)
- “Schools shall be evaluated by the percentage of the school’s eligible students who achieve a passing score on the SOL tests or other additional tests approved by the board as outlined in 8 VAC 20-131-110.B of these regulations in the four core academic areas administered in the school.” (8 VAC 20-131-280.C.5 waived for science and history/social science)

In the approved alternative accreditation plan, school accreditation is based on the following criterion:

- 70 percent of students functioning as 8th graders will pass the 8th grade Standards of Learning assessments in reading, writing, and mathematics, and will be promoted to the 9th grade.

For school year 2004-05, Chesterfield County reports the following:

- 100 of the 125 students enrolled at Perrymont were deemed to be functioning at the 8th grade level at mid-year last year, and 107 were promoted to the 9th grade.
- Based on the spring 2005 Standards of Learning test results:
 - ✓ 71.6 percent passed the mathematics Standards of Learning test, compared to 61 percent last year;
 - ✓ Students gained 33 points in mathematics, compared to their 5th grade pass rate;
 - ✓ 61 percent passed the reading Standards of Learning test, compared to 53 percent last year;
 - ✓ Students gained 1.3 points in reading, compared to their 5th grade pass rate;
 - ✓ 40 percent passed the writing Standards of Learning test, compared to 49 percent last year;
 - ✓ Students lost 22 points in writing, compared to their 5th grade pass rate;

- Perrymont Middle School made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for the 2005-06 school year, based on 2004-05 test results.

Superintendent's Recommendation: The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board waive first review and approve the request to extend the alternative accreditation plan for three years.

Impact on Resources: The impact on resources is not expected to be significant.

Timetable for Further Review/Action: Chesterfield County Public Schools may be granted an additional extension at the end of the three year period contingent upon the submission of an evaluation showing that the stated objectives of the program and evaluative criteria are continuing to be met.

*THE ALTERNATIVE ACCREDITATION
MODEL FOR PERRYMONT MIDDLE
SCHOOL IN CHESTERFIELD COUNTY –
A STATUS REPORT
AND REQUEST FOR AN EXTENSION*

Presented to the State Board of Education
September 21, 2005
By Dr. Billy K. Cannaday,
Superintendent
Chesterfield County Public Schools

BACKGROUND

- In July 2004 the Board of Education approved an alternative accreditation model for Perrymont Middle, an alternative middle school serving students from across Chesterfield County
- The school was redesigned to serve middle grade students who are:
 - overage in grade,
 - two or more years below grade level in reading and mathematics and
 - lacking the skills of self-management to ensure their success in high school.
- The Board of Education approved accreditation for Perrymont based on:
 - 70% of students deemed to be functioning as 8th graders will pass the SOL tests in Reading, Writing & Mathematics; students may take the grade level assessments for 6th and 7th grade to measure progress but only the 8th grade results will be used to calculate accreditation
 - History and science embedded in instruction in those three
 - Physical education based on a school wide walking program and free play
 - The teaching of study and self-management skills
 - Evaluation that includes follow-up with students as 9th graders
 - A longer school day (6 ½ hours)
 - Lower PTR (budgeted 17:1; actual 12:1)
- Waivers inherent in the approval:
 - Minimum of eight courses in 8th grade
 - Middle school electives
 - 140 clock hours of instruction in history and science
 - Accreditation based on the four core subjects

THE 2004-05 SCHOOL YEAR RESULTS

- Perrymont served 125 students, 100 of which were deemed to be functioning at the 8th grade level at mid-year and participated in SOL 8th grade tests in the spring of 05
 - Mathematics
 - 71.6% passed compared to 61% last year
 - Students gained 33 points against their 5th grade scores
 - Reading
 - 61% passed compared to 53% last year
 - Students gained 1.3 points against their 5th grade scores
 - Writing
 - 40% passed compared to 49% last year
 - Students lost 22 points against their 5th grade score
- CCPS Response
 - Mathematics successes from
 - 90 minutes of instruction per day
 - Prescribed curriculum and pacing
 - Team planning resulting in common lessons
 - Common systematic monitoring (weekly and quarterly assessments)
 - Central support from specialists and directors
 - ARDT used to assess areas of strength and challenge and to monitor progress
 - Improvements being sought in Writing and Reading in 2005-06 through
 - Have adopted 6 Traits and 4 Square to integrate teaching of reading and writing this year in 165 minutes per day
 - Have replaced the TABE with the DRA and *AMP Reading* to allow for comprehensive reading diagnostic at beginning of year and quarterly for progress, regrouping for instruction, and better prediction for testing

PLANNED FOLLOW-UP AND EVALUATION

- Follow-up evaluation - 107 students were promoted to 9th grade
 - Will be interviewed by their Perrymont teachers after the first 4 weeks; questions will focus on:
 - How Perrymont prepared them to be successful in high school core subjects, study skills and self-management
 - Problem areas for them, including remediation needs, relationships with peers, family issues
 - Comments sections for students to send messages back to certain Perrymont teachers will be provided
 - Academic results, attendance, participation in extracurricular activities, and discipline will be reviewed after first 9 weeks of this school year

REQUEST FOR EXTENSION

- Efforts and results are being examined and revised to find the most successful approaches for these students to experience success for the long-term
- Request a three-year approval of the alternative accreditation plan with annual reports submitted to the Board of Education on our learnings and progress